

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Suction-assisted tissue-engaging devices, systems, and methods are disclosed that apply suction through an arm vacuum lumen of an articulating arm and a suction lumen and ports of a suction member applied to the heart to stabilize or position the heart during a surgical procedure. The articulating arm is manipulated in shape while in a flexible condition or state and maintains the shape in a rigid condition or state. The arm vacuum lumen is not sealed when the articulating arm is in the flexible state and is sealed when the articulating arm is in the rigid state. Distal suction members comprise a pair of distally extending stabilizer pods mounted to be spread apart when the tensioning mechanism is operated to render the articulating arm rigid or a suction pad having flexible appendages or legs having suction ports adapted to be applied against the epicardium at or near the apex of the heart.